



WORKFORCE OBSERVATIONS

State of Wisconsin
Department of Workforce Development
Office of Economic Advisors

FOR WEST CENTRAL WISCONSIN COUNTIES

BARRON, CHIPPEWA, CLARK, DUNN, EAU CLAIRE, PEPIN, PIERCE, POLK, ST. CROIX

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Seasonal Climb in Unemployment Continues

Unemployment rates in the nine counties of West Central Wisconsin took a big jump in January but for most of the counties the new rates are still lower than those of the previous January. The West Central region unemployment rate in January was 6.4 percent, up from 4.8 percent in December but still below the 6.6 percent unemployment rate from January 2004.

The release of the January

2005 unemployment rate includes revisions to the estimates previously published for 2004 and is the primary reason the release of labor force data occurs in March and not February. For many counties the revised 2004 data incorporated a smaller number of both employed and unemployed residents in the labor force.

The labor force in January 2005 in West Central Wisconsin included 219,500 residents with

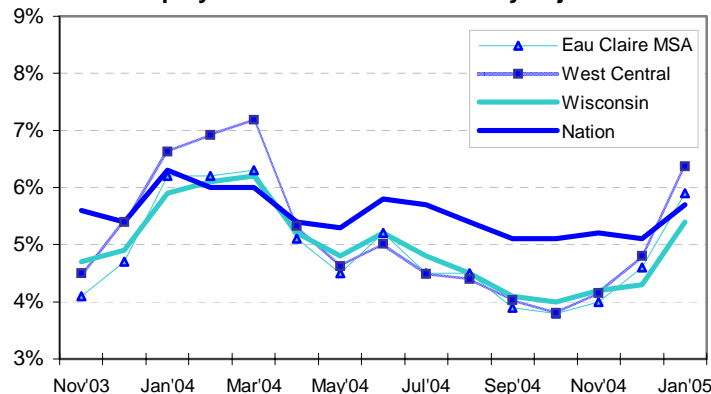
jobs and 14,925 residents unemployed and looking for work compared with one year ago when there were 221,820 residents with jobs and 15,740 unemployed.

In January 2005 in the Eau Claire-Chippewa metropolitan area there were 49,215 residents with jobs and 2,515 residents unemployed and looking for work. The unemployment rate in the metro area was 5.9 percent, up from 4.6 percent in December 2004 but lower than the rate of one year ago of 6.2 percent. As of January 2005, the State of Wisconsin will no longer produce seasonally adjusted labor force data for metropolitan areas or the state.

It is very common for unemployment rates to take a big hike from December to January and the increase this year of 1.6 percentage points is very close to what is typical and less than the jumps the area experienced in the early 2000s. January unemployment rates spike because the area is flooded with seasonal lay offs.

The increase in the number of residents unemployed in West

Unemployment Rates-Not seasonally adjusted



	Nov'03	Dec'03	Jan'04	Nov'04	Dec'04	Jan'05
Eau Claire MSA	4.1%	4.7%	6.2%	4.0%	4.6%	5.9%
West Central	4.5%	5.4%	6.6%	4.2%	4.8%	6.4%
Wisconsin	4.7%	4.9%	5.9%	4.2%	4.3%	5.4%
Nation	5.6%	5.4%	6.3%	5.2%	5.1%	5.7%

Civilian Labor Force Estimates* for West Central Wisconsin counties: January 2005

	Barron			Chippewa			Clark			Dunn			Eau Claire Co.		
	Jan '05	Dec '04	Jan '04	Jan '05	Dec '04	Jan '04	Jan '05	Dec '04	Jan '04	Jan '05	Dec '04	Jan '04	Jan '05	Dec '04	Jan '04
Labor force	23,863	23,737	24,580	30,179	30,745	30,223	16,415	16,254	17,444	21,918	22,123	23,321	51,731	53,089	51,870
Employed	22,092	22,438	22,740	27,881	28,917	27,857	15,055	15,292	16,007	20,622	21,135	21,923	49,215	51,044	49,172
Unemployed	1,771	1,299	1,840	2,298	1,828	2,366	1,360	962	1,437	1,296	988	1,398	2,516	2,045	2,698
% unemployed	7.4	5.5	7.5	7.6	5.9	7.8	8.3	5.9	8.2	5.9	4.5	6.0	4.9	3.9	5.2

	Pepin			Pierce			Polk			St. Croix			West Central region		
	Jan '05	Dec '04	Jan '04	Jan '05	Dec '04	Jan '04	Jan '05	Dec '04	Jan '04	Jan '05	Dec '04	Jan '04	Jan '05	Dec '04	Jan '04
Labor force	3,664	3,645	3,808	22,875	22,909	22,473	22,209	21,956	22,678	41,568	41,602	41,160	234,422	236,060	237,557
Employed	3,380	3,433	3,524	21,578	21,937	21,204	20,583	20,782	20,976	39,093	39,745	38,415	219,499	224,723	221,818
Unemployed	284	212	284	1,297	972	1,269	1,626	1,174	1,702	2,475	1,857	2,745	14,923	11,337	15,739
% unemployed	7.8	5.8	7.5	5.7	4.2	5.6	7.3	5.3	7.5	6.0	4.5	6.7	6.4	4.8	6.6

* not seasonally adjusted

Industry Employment Estimates for West Central Wisconsin: January 2005

(Employment in thousands)	Barron			Clark			Dunn			Pepin		
	Jan '05	Dec '04	Jan '04	Jan '05	Dec '04	Jan '04	Jan '05	Dec '04	Jan '04	Jan '05	Dec '04	Jan '04
Total Nonfarm	21.0	21.5	21.0	9.9	10.1	9.7	15.3	15.9	16.2	2.0	2.1	2.0
Const/Min'g/Nat. Resources	0.5	0.7	0.6	0.4	0.5	0.4	0.5	0.6	0.5	0.1	0.2	0.1
Manufacturing	5.5	5.6	5.8	2.8	2.7	2.8	2.4	2.4	2.3	0.1	0.1	0.1
Trade	3.6	3.7	3.5	1.4	1.5	1.4	2.5	2.7	2.5	0.5	0.5	0.5
Transportation & Utilities	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.4	0.4	0.4	1.6	1.6	1.7	0.1	0.1	0.1
Financial Activities	0.7	0.6	0.6	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.1	0.1	0.1
Education & Health Services	2.6	2.6	2.5	1.1	1.1	1.1	1.7	1.7	1.6	0.3	0.3	0.3
Leisure & Hospitality	1.6	1.6	1.5	0.7	0.7	0.7	1.3	1.3	1.3	0.1	0.1	0.1
Info/Prof. & Bus.Serv./Other	1.6	1.6	1.5	0.7	0.7	0.7	1.4	1.4	1.3	0.2	0.2	0.2
Total Government	4.4	4.5	4.4	2.0	2.1	2.0	3.4	3.6	4.6	0.5	0.5	0.5
	Pierce			Polk			St. Croix			Eau Claire MSA		
	Jan '05	Dec '04	Jan '04	Jan '05	Dec '04	Jan '04	Jan '05	Dec '04	Jan '04	Jan '05	Dec '04	Jan '04
Total Nonfarm	10.3	11.0	9.4	14.6	14.9	14.7	26.7	27.6	26.3	75.1	78.6	74.2
Const/Min'g/Nat. Resources	0.6	0.7	0.4	0.6	0.7	0.6	1.5	1.7	1.4	2.8	3.1	2.5
Manufacturing	0.8	0.9	0.8	3.5	3.6	3.7	5.4	5.5	5.5	10.3	10.4	10.1
Trade	0.9	1.0	1.0	2.1	2.1	2.1	4.5	4.6	4.3	12.8	13.2	13.1
Transportation & Utilities	0.3	0.4	0.4	0.3	0.3	0.3	1.0	1.1	1.0	2.8	2.9	2.8
Financial Activities	0.4	0.4	0.4	0.6	0.5	0.5	1.3	1.3	1.2	3.8	3.9	3.8
Education & Health Services	1.2	1.2	1.1	2.0	2.0	1.9	2.9	2.9	2.9	12.8	12.9	12.5
Leisure & Hospitality	1.1	1.1	1.1	1.1	1.1	1.4	2.9	3.0	2.8	6.6	6.8	7.1
Information/Prof. & Bus.Serv.	1.2	1.2	1.1	1.9	1.9	1.7	3.6	3.7	3.5	8.5	8.9	8.2
Other Services	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	3.6	3.7	3.6
Total Government	3.9	4.2	3.0	2.5	2.6	2.6	3.5	3.7	3.6	11.1	12.8	10.5

Current month preliminary. Estimates based on March 2004 benchmark. Summing from unrounded numbers.

Central Wisconsin from 11,340 in December to 14,925 in January reflects the increase in the number of residents filing claims for unemployment compensation benefits. In mid-December 2004 5,076 residents filed a claim for unemployment compensation benefits. By mid-January 2005 that increased to 8,147 residents who filed a claim for benefits. Although high, the January count is down 900 from twelve months earlier.

The estimate of unemployed includes more than just those residents who filed a claim for unemployment compensation benefits since not every one out of a job qualifies for unemployment benefits. Every month the U.S. Census Bureau surveys households nationwide. The survey is conducted the week that includes the 12th day of the month. The results are published in the Current Population Survey and are incor-

porated into state and county labor force estimates for both the number of unemployed and employed. The number of residents filing a claim for unemployment benefits is used in the local formula but the estimate also includes new job seekers and those out of work and looking for a job but who do qualify for unemployment benefits.

The number of resident employed is also greater than the number of jobs reported in the nonfarm wage and salary employment series. Non-farm jobs, which include the number of payroll jobs with employers located in the West Central region, numbered 174,900 in January 2005. The total number of employed in the region was much greater and includes an estimate, based on the monthly census survey, of the number of residents who work for employers not located in the region, who are self-employed

or proprietors, or who work for an employer not covered by Wisconsin's unemployment insurance law; ie: railroads or work-study programs.

The number of nonfarm wage and salary jobs declined from December and like the increase in unemployment claims, reflects the seasonal trends often experienced in this area. However, compared with one year ago, there are 1,300 more jobs in the region and some of those additional jobs are with area manufacturing firms. Manufacturing employers in Dunn County added 100 jobs since last January and in Eau Claire County they added 200 jobs. In other counties manufacturing job declined over the last twelve months.

The majority of jobs added since January 2004 were with employers in education and health services and in information, professional and business services.



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